

**Do the Images of Chinese Films Mirroring
Imperialism? Take the Chinese Film Wolf Warrior II
as an Example**

**by
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Abstract

The "Going Global" Strategy of Chinese culture aims to allow foreign countries to understand Chinese culture better and convey the voice of peace through cultural forms such as movies. *Wolf Warrior 2*, a Chinese film, has a very high box office in China. It may be inconsistent with the way China hopes to portray itself on the global stage. This article uses the Chinese commercial film *Wolf Warrior 2*, released in 2017 and re-screened in 2020, as a research case to evaluate whether it reflects imperialist power. Through case analysis and text analysis of movie content, this article considers the mapping of *Wolf Warrior 2* to imperialist power from the protagonist's image, lines, and movie images and reveals the causes of this phenomenon from the economic, political, and cultural aspects.

Keywords: "Going Out" Strategy; *Wolf Warrior 2*; Imperialism; "Main Melody" Film

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List of Acronyms

CPC Communist Party of China

Chapter 1.

Introduction

With the acceleration of social development and globalization, the strategy of cultural “Going Out” has been strongly advocated by the Chinese government. “Chinese culture goes to the world” (Going Out Strategy) has become one of the important goals of China's new era construction. The Sixth Plenary Session of the 17th CPC Central Committee clearly pointed out that “China should carry out multiform and multilevel cultural communication with the outside world, enhance the international community's understanding and knowledge of China's basic national conditions, values, development path, and internal and external policies, present a civilized and democratic image of China, and to convey the voice of peaceful development.” *Wolf Warrior 2*, a Chinese film that has had extremely high box office in China, but whose images may actually be inconsistent with the way China wants to portray itself on the global stage.

This research uses the theory of *Imperialism and Neo-imperialism* as the basic framework. The framework focuses on analyzing the characteristics of imperialism and recognizing the nature of today's capitalist world economy through an account of the logic of territory, dispossession accumulation, and the logic of capital. Any communication is political in nature and cannot be separated from the world context. This means that the focus is to clarify China's position in the world and to treat the relationship between culture and politics dialectically.

The story in *Wolf Warrior 2* takes place in Africa. The main plot of the film is that Leng Feng, a Chinese soldier who has been discharged from the army, is involved in a rebellion in an African country. He could have been safely evacuated, but he could not forget his duty as a soldier, so he returned to the battlefield alone to rescue the refugees. At the end of the movie, Leng Feng is henceforth accompanied by an American doctor. I studied *Wolf Warrior 2* to examine whether the movie reflects the power and lure of imperialism and whether the results are consistent with the Chinese cultural “Going Out” Strategy. I explore convincing reasons for why *Wolf Warrior 2* was unpopular in foreign countries examining by examining the political, economic and cultural messages in the text. The narrative of individual Chinese heroism presented in a Hollywood-style

narrative structure and spectacle feels contradictory in relation to the objectives of the “Going Out” Strategy. The film's hard-line propaganda in regard to China-Africa cooperation hardly resonates emotionally with foreign audiences.

1.1. The History of the Chinese Cultural “Going Out” Strategy

China's cultural “Going Out” strategy has gone through a long period from its formulation to its implementation. In ancient times, some exchange activities implemented at the national level can be said to be the earliest examples of China's cultural "Going Out" activities. For example, the Maritime Silk Road in the Qin and Han Dynasties and Zheng He's voyages to the West in the Ming Dynasty. These activities are all in the form of sending envoys and trade to make Chinese culture gradually go abroad. Although their initial purpose was not to promote Chinese culture, they laid the foundation for China's cultural exchanges with other countries and regions in Asia, Africa and Europe (Luo, 2007). In addition, what must be mentioned here is the Siege of the International Legations (1900) in the Qing Dynasty. Unlike before, this exchange was completely forced for China. After the war, China's sovereignty was lost; China's "national gate" was forced to open, which also promoted cultural exchanges. In general, cultural exchanges in this historical period have not yet risen to the level of national strategy.

With the development of Chinese Marxism and the establishment of the Communist Party of China, China's development entered a new era in the second half of the twentieth century. In the early years of the founding of Communist China, the Chinese government paid more attention to cultural exchanges with foreign countries in order to gain international recognition. The international situation at that time (1949) influenced China to engage in cultural exchanges and cooperation mainly with socialist countries such as the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, as well as developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America that had similar experiences to China. These exchanges helped to consolidate and develop friendly relations among socialist countries (Hu, 2010). Between 1949 and 1958, literary and artistic representative groups, performing arts groups and cultural celebrities from France, Poland, Germany and other countries visited China, while China also actively sent cultural groups to visit abroad, including in the form of shadow puppets, puppetry and Beijing opera. Cultural exchanges

during this period played the role of a "diplomatic precursor" and laid the practical foundation for China's cultural ascension into a national strategy (Qu, 2017). At the early stage of reform and opening up, Deng Xiaoping (1993) pointed out, "What attitude should we adopt toward modern Western bourgeois culture? The policy of opening up the economy to the outside world is correct and should be adhered to for a long time. Cultural exchanges with foreign countries should also be developed in the long term."

At the outset, the strategy of "Going Out" was a major strategy for China's economic development, first proposed at the 14th CPC Congress in 1992. The initial meaning of the Going Out tended to emphasize economic strategy, such as "actively exploring international markets, developing an export-oriented economy, and actively expanding Chinese enterprises' foreign investment and multinational operations (Zhou, 2010)." With the development of economic globalization, in addition to economic exchanges between countries and regions, political and cultural exchanges have been strengthened, and there is a trend of cultural diversification (Zhou, 2010). This makes culture one of the important links of national image, and is regarded as one of the key indicators to measure a country's comprehensive national strength and competitiveness. As a result, the role of culture has been elevated to a new level (Luo, 2007).

From 2002 to 2014, the strategy of "Going Out" for culture has gone from being a general concern to a highly detailed and significant policy. During the Eleventh Five-Year Plan period (2006 - 2010), the spiritual and cultural needs of the Chinese people have become increasingly diverse and continuously improved. Chinese Minister of Culture Sun Jiazheng (2007) clearly pointed out that during the Eleventh Five-Year Plan, "China should integrate into the international community with a more open attitude, further expand cultural exchanges with the outside world, and implement the 'Going Out' Strategy. The purpose of vigorously spreading contemporary Chinese culture is to establish a new image of contemporary China and build China into an international cultural center based in the Asia-Pacific region and facing the world." The Fifth Plenary Session of the Sixteenth Central Committee clearly pointed out that the construction of advanced socialist culture should accelerate the implementation of the strategy of Going Out with cultural products and the promotion of Chinese culture to the world (Luo, 2007 & Hu, 2010). In recent years, cultural Going Out across the globe has become a national strategic project. The focus has been to vigorously develop the cultural industries, on a global scale to support foreign trade and promote Chinese culture abroad.

The report of the 18th National Congress (2012) pointed out that China should continue to deepen its opening to the outside world in the field of culture, actively drawing on the excellent cultural achievements of foreign countries while striving to make greater strides in the outward expansion of Chinese culture. The aim is consolidate the foundation for the construction of a strong socialist cultural state. It is not difficult to see that the culture going out strategy is actually the inevitable extension of the economic “Going Out” Strategy in the field of cultural industry, and is a key initiative for China's cultural industry to gradually penetrate into the international cultural industry competition.

From 2016 to the present, the pace of Chinese culture going out has accelerated. In the 29th meeting of the Central Leading Group for Comprehensively Deepening Reform chaired by President Xi Jinping (2020), the meeting considered and adopted the "Guidance on Further Strengthening and Improving the Work of Chinese Culture Going Out", emphasizing the need to strengthen and promote the work of Chinese culture going out, to strengthen cultural self-confidence, to enhance the infectious power and competitiveness of Chinese culture, and to explain and promote culture with Chinese characteristics, reflecting the Chinese spirit to the world. The aim has been to improve the national cultural soft power. It can be seen that the top-level design and strategic requirements for cultural going out are constantly refined. Xi put cultural construction at the top of his overall agenda. The Chinese government has formulated a series of guidelines and policies and improved relevant systems to provide political assurance for Chinese culture to go global.

With the in-depth development of economic globalization, cultural diversification has become an inevitable trend. Yu Guoming (2019) believes that the essence of cultural communication in the cultural “Going Out” Strategy is to convey true and comprehensive Chinese culture, to gain a fair voice and resolve misunderstandings. However, international communication is never just a one-way or even assimilation process, but is full of structural and dynamic tension, especially the direct projection of the uneven and unequal international hard power pattern on the soft power relationship. More importantly, this projection is often internalized by the participants, and the final result is not the expected new order, but the adjustment and continuation of the old order (Ji, 2021). On the one hand, the “Going Out” Strategy proposed by the Chinese government strives to show the excellent traditional Chinese culture to the world and to

introduce advanced world culture to China (Long, 2016). On the other hand, the implementation of the Chinese cultural "Going Out" Strategy is also to maintain the diversity of world civilization. China has always adhered to the principles of peaceful development and mutual benefit (Xi, 2021). However, the rapid development of China has also attracted Western research on the "Chinese model". Some Westerners regard China's development as a challenge to their values. False statements such as the "China Threat Theory" reflect cultural conflicts caused by differences in international cultural dissemination. Therefore, the Chinese government is paying more and more attention to the "going out" of Chinese culture.

1.2. Imperialism and Cultural Imperialism

The term "Empire" was coined with the empires of the ancient civilizations of slavery and was generally characterized as a vast, powerful, and influential state with worldwide influence, symbolizing the power of the state's ruling instrument. The term "Imperialism" was originally used to describe only the classical empires of Western civilization, such as the Roman Empire, which were constantly engaged in plundering and expansion (Ma, 1993). With the establishment of the world colonial system, "imperialism" has been given a colonial expansion connotation. The more systematic study of imperialism began in the late 19th century and early 20th century, when imperialist doctrine was based on the colonial expansion of modern Western capitalist countries.

Hobson (1902) pointed out that the formation of imperialism lies in economy rather than politics and military. He proposed that imperialism is a country's control of the systems and lives of other countries for its own purposes. He emphasized the need to use the theory of insufficient consumption to solve the problem. The root cause of insufficient consumption is mainly the insufficient purchasing power of the poor and the excessive saving of the rich caused by the unequal distribution of national income. Bukharin (1983) associated accumulation with world capitalism. Luxemburg (1913) put forward a different view from Marx on social reproduction. She believed that it must rely on a certain market outside the capital system to digest and provide accumulation for capitalists. This market will gradually be drawn into the entire capitalist system. Lenin (1917) criticized this view, stating that imperialism was not an advanced stage of colonialism, but the highest stage of capitalism. Lenin had given this definition of

imperialism at the beginning of the 20th century: imperialism is monopolistic capitalism, parasitic decaying capitalism, dying capitalism. Monopoly instead of free competition is the fundamental economic characteristic of imperialism and the essence of imperialism (Lenin, 1917).

Now a century has passed since Lenin's definition of imperialism and with the development of capitalism, imperialism has taken on new characteristics. In the context of globalization, its fundamental intention is to shape a new world structure in accordance with the logic of capital (Gu, 2011). Neo-imperialism is characterized by a greater emphasis on the logic of capital than a hard-line military approach, a broader and more enlisting means of plunder in the field of expansion, but with increasing power, unabated control of capital and culture, and greater monopoly and exclusivity (Harvey, 2010 & Gu, 2011). The concrete manifestations are threefold: militarily, strengthening armaments for defensive intervention and further expansion of its own camp. Economically, it commodifies everything, forcibly opens the world market through its control of international economic organizations and makes the participants comply with the rules established at its behest. Culturally, it uses the cultural hegemony of "soft power" to penetrate bourgeois values. In short, neo-imperialism is the reconstruction of the world according to the logic of capital, using the means of dispossession and accumulation to its own will (Gu, 2011).

The concept of cultural imperialism originated in the 1960s and is a branch of post-colonialism (Chen, 2018). After World War II, Western powers relied on their economic and technological advantages to inculcate their own cultural ideology into developing countries through mass media and cultural trade, in order to assimilate the audience and seek political and economic benefits from it (Gramsci, 1931). The essential kernel of cultural imperialism is that the hegemony of fluid economic domination has not been eliminated by economic liberalization; instead, neoliberalism has given the invisible cultural empire a more insidious and fragmented form (Shi, 2021 & Li, 2019). This reflects Lenin's analysis of imperialism — a kind of capitalist expansion under the sovereign will of the state. As Hall (1976) argues, in capitalist societies with highly developed levels of production, culture is commodified and developed in the service of economic and political power. Under the dual power of the promotion and expansion demand of communication technology, people must be alert to the problem of "cultural and information confusion": when culture in the form of

information in the form of intrusive information constantly hole in the boundaries of traditional nation-state and "other" identity, inside and outside the dimension, the strong position of the capital discourse will cover up all the "anachronistic" resistance discourse (Mattelart, 1992).

There is no denying the limitations of explanation for cultural imperialism (Zhang, 2016, p.4). After the end of the Cold War, as the debate over the international communication order turned to the question of personalization and liberalization, "cultural imperialism" was considered an old-fashioned argument and even lost its effectiveness in explaining communication and social problems. Part of the problem is caused by an ill-defined research framework, whether it's a focus on national analysis or a class-based approach. In conclusion, cultural imperialism originated in the West. Especially in the mid to late 20th century, with the United States as the center, with the development of globalization, the rise of China, and the emergence of new information infrastructure, all countries were disrupted by means of information warfare. China's "Going Out" Strategy responds to this background, recognizing that countries other than the United States have used the struggle for cultural hegemony for their own benefit. It is undeniable that China is bound to be a part of globalization, and China also needs to find its own direction in such an increasingly intense development situation. China urgently needs to gain a foothold on the world stage and make its own voice. However, this also poses a problem for China's competition with imperialism in the process of globalization.

1.3. How Culture is Used in the Service of Imperialism and State Power: The Case of the United States

The term "cultural hegemony" refers to the shift in perspective from the apparatus of violence to the ideological aspect of the modern capitalist state, revealing the important characteristics of the modern capitalist state that combine violent coercion with cultural control (Antonio, 1971). The monopoly of discourse and the construction of the "other" are the two major theoretical foundations of American cultural hegemony. Cultural hegemony is not easily recognized. However, the U.S. pursuit of global hegemony is not unidimensional but all-dimensional (Zheng, 2018). While the United States has a dominant position in traditional areas such as the military and economy, it also pursues cultural hegemony around the globe. The appearance of cultural

imperialism is less visible than military victories on the battlefield or prosperity in the economic and trade spheres, but it is more subversive and less perceptible.

According to the main logic of cultural imperialism, assimilation is an outgrowth of the process of cultural homogenization and is a necessary path to cultural imperialism implemented by global leaders. Hollywood films, the symbol of the American film industry, are a major vehicle for the export of American cultural imperialism, inducing the belief that American society is the ideal society and that good can always triumph over evil (Ibbi, 2013. p. 104). Hollywood prides itself on being far from politics and pursuing entertainment supremacy, but in reality many of these films are not far from politics, and even actively move closer to politics, known as "ambassadors in the iron box". The cultures that the United States is spreading, such as excellent governance and the free flow of information, are actually sending the same message that there is no alternative to the social organization model of American capitalism (Hamm, 2015). The aim is to make American ideology, political ideas, science, law, and morality the goals, templates and rules that the world pursues.

The Hollywood industry has an important role in exporting American ideology and serving national power. The fact that Hollywood films can assume the role of spreading American ideology is the result of the overlapping of multiple factors. First of all, Hollywood films mostly focus on humanistic care and the pursuit of freedom in their narrative expression, and this ideological export has a strong concealment. According to Said (1978), the logical relationship between Hollywood films and ideological export is that there are great differences between Eastern and Western cultures, and non-Western culture should be subordinated to Western culture. Hollywood films often transcend national, cultural, religious, and racial boundaries in their storyline design, positioning their audiences to fans all over the world, not only American fans (Shin, 2008 & Namkung, 2008). Films such as *Forrest Gump* (1994) and *Coco* (2017) invisibly build emotional identity and bridge the differences between different cultural backgrounds, thus overcoming the obstacles on the road of cross-cultural communication and spreading the American way of life and values to the rest of the world.

Second, Hollywood films also have the characteristics of being widespread and persistent in shaping and spreading the national image of the United States. Stimulated by economic interests, Hollywood constantly supplies film products to audiences all over

the world. The stability of this supply source guarantees the stability and continuous expansion of movie fans. On the one hand, movies with the same themes are constantly being remade and new movies are being created at the same time to avoid fans getting bored. On the other hand, in the age of information technology and visualization, Hollywood films have further constructed fans' sense of American identity in images by virtue of their technological advantages. This provides a lot of space for Hollywood films to export the concept and ideology of American life.

1.4. Commercialization of "Main Melody" Films

"Main Melody" was originally a concept in music art. It is the main tune of one part in music performance, while the other parts can only play a supplementary, enriching, and polished role (Shi, 2020). The concept of "Main Melody" was first introduced into film and television culture in the late 20th century. At that time, popular culture became the dominant culture in the cultural market under the impetus of emerging media, and new conflicts appeared in the cultural field. In this context, the China Film Bureau held a feature film creation conference in March 1989. Teng Jinxian (1989), the director of the Film Bureau, put forward the creative slogan of "highlighting the Main Melody and insisting on diversification". Since then, the term "Main Melody" has been widely used.

For a long time, academics have not given a clear definition of "Main Melody" Films. On the one hand, the diverse nature of film art itself determines the complexity of "Main Melody" Films. On the other hand, the contents and connotations of films have been changing in different historical periods (Su, 2010 & Kong, 2018). In the early days, Chinese cinema was divided into the Art Film, Commercial Film, and "Main Melody" Film, however, this classification itself obscured the possibility of combining "Main Melody" Films with the other two, and even cut off the expression of the aesthetic properties of film as art (Zhang, 2017, p. 9). For China, the "Main Melody" Film is mainly classified by the social function of film, which assumes the educational and political propaganda function of spreading the mainstream national ideology. However, with the restructuring of the cultural industry and the reform of the film market, "Main Melody" Films have taken on a new development. It can be said that the commercialization of the so-called "Main Melody" Films is a solution introduced by Chinese filmmakers to meet the commercial needs (Su, 2010).

In order to achieve the goal of comprehensively promoting "socialism with Chinese characteristics into the 21st century" as proposed by the 15th National Congress of the CPC, all industries in China, including the film industry, have accelerated the speed of marketization. Su (2010) believes that China's "Main Melody" Films has two characteristics. The first is to dilute political conflicts, highlight the fate of ordinary people, and ensure the neutrality of the narrative. The second is the extensive use of Hollywood models to actively embrace the more human side of warfare — a common feature in Hollywood films. According to Kong (2018), the commercialization of Chinese "Main Melody" Films is divided into three main dimensions, namely point of view, timing, and positioning. The viewpoint is changed from the elite perspective to the popular viewpoint. From the perspective of timing, the policy has accepted the political artistry. In terms of positioning, Chinese "Main Melody" Films seek to "Going Out". However, for the commercialization of "Main Melody" Films, whether such films with extremely strong national ideologies can meet the standards of "Going Out" is questionable.

1.5. Redefining the Political Role of Film as a Commercial Product

Socialist parties used the communication media as their propaganda tools in the early days and attached great importance to the role of cinema. Lenin mentioned in his "Outline on the Production of Propaganda" that "the cinema should be used more widely and frequently for propaganda" (Liu, 2011). The Chinese Communist Party has always used film as a form of propaganda for its political ideas. For example, in 1932, the "Mukden Incident" left-wing literary workers joined the film production as scriptwriters, using film as a subtle art form to propagate patriotic ideas and socialist ideas. Because of the tradition of socialist party film work, Chinese films after the founding of the People's Republic of China have taken on more tasks of political indoctrination. From left-wing films to Cultural Revolution films to "Main Melody" films, the CPC focuses on the mainstream political culture advocated by the pre-set ruling class in storytelling, using the classic characters in the films to stimulate the public's passion for building socialism and promote the implementation of political socialization.

At the 1998 Nanchang Film Conference, the Minister of Propaganda, Ding Guangen, said, "The film industry must win the market to prosper." Under the condition

of socialist market economy, film as a cultural product cannot be independent of the market economy" (Zhao, 2000). However, under China's political structure and strict censorship, the status of film, like that of culture, has always been contradictory or dual-functional and dominated by the government's discourse (Su, 2010). Film and politics intersect. The similarity between "power" and "image" comes from this hidden but deliberate desire. Unwittingly, the two control each other, forcing the audience to move in a clear direction without recognizing any "visually perceived" images or content.

1.6. Action Films: a Fusion of Traditional Chinese Elements and Hollywood Techniques

At present, there is no accurate classification for action films. Some scholars believe that it is reasonable to classify action films according to their themes, which can be comprehensive and avoid repetition, and Zhang (2015) classifies action films into kung fu films, police films, gangster films, war films, spy films, martial arts films, and Superman series. Another group of scholars believes that, if classified by subject matter, it necessarily involves the relationship between action movies and martial arts films (Li, 2010 & Chen, 2010). Some scholars have divided Chinese martial arts film scenes into three categories: offensive, competitive, and display, all of which are based on storyline judgment (Jia, 2015 & Qi, 2015). Chinese-specific martial arts films can be considered as early action movies, and today's Chinese action movies are based on elements such as the theme of justice and evil, the heroism of the hero and the creation of sensory stimulation (Suo, 2001, p.8). Therefore, martial arts film is a stage in the evolution of action movies.

In the 1970s, the action skills in Hong Kong action films were based on traditional Chinese martial arts, which were very different from Hollywood action films. Actors such as Bruce Lee began to show their Chinese martial arts prowess in action films. Bruce Lee's deep martial arts skills allowed him to present the most realistic martial arts in his films, such as leaping through the air or striking with great speed. All of this is done without any special effects technology. Unlike the fighting atmosphere of Hong Kong films, Hollywood action films from the 1990s onwards have created more intense and exciting action scenes with the help of high technology. This period of Hollywood movies is filled with the battle between airplanes and sports cars. With the aid of modern

technology, Hollywood movies presented the audience with powerful visual impact and exciting fighting scenes.

The most iconic film of all time is *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, made by director Ang Lee in 2002. This film won the 73rd Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. Technically, the movie uses Hollywood digital effects to create a lot of action spectacles. In order to improve the spectacle of martial arts action, *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* tries to combine martial arts action with Western dance art, so that the martial arts scenes show the beauty of dashing and smooth action. In addition, director Ang Lee brought *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* to the international market by borrowing from the American Goodwill model of film promotion, and the action film was hailed as a "balletic art film" by Western film audiences.

Despite China's strict film censorship, both Hollywood and Chinese filmmakers consider this age-old theme to be politically safe, economically less risky, and commercially successful (Su, 2010). As a result, action films have become a major genre for transnational co-productions.

Inevitably, economic globalization has also led to different degrees of convergence in the production of cultures in various countries around the world. More and more countries accuse this singularization of global culture to a large extent controlled by American values and lifestyles and claim that since the rise of American culture in the wave of globalization, American culture has stifled other countries through American entertainment and cultural products (Liu, 2021). Although this statement is biased, it is undeniable that American cultural products have successfully occupied the world market with their unique methods and content, and effectively promoted American culture, and enhanced the national cultural power of the United States as a nation.

Different from American Hollywood movies, due to the pre-implantation of the Western discourse system and the weak construction of the Chinese discourse system, especially the lack of awareness of ideological discourse rights, the construction of an ideological discourse system with Chinese characteristics has always been difficult to obtain solid cultural support. The discursive position of Chinese mainstream ideology was frequently impacted, and once faced the danger of speech loss and aphasia. Based on this, China strives to revive the Chinese national culture. The cultural "Going Out"

Strategy came into being, and the "Main Melody" film showed a political role. It should be noted that the main function of the "Main Melody" film is internal, that is, to establish positive and healthy cultural values in China. The role of Hollywood movies is to penetrate the ideology of other countries through cultural soft power such as movies. On the one hand, the first and foremost task of the political nature of movies in the Chinese system mentioned here is to enable the Chinese nation to enhance its cultural self-confidence and maintain the diversity of world culture. However, on the other hand, despite the different demands, Chinese films under the current cultural "Going Out" Strategy does intend to imitate American Hollywood, enhance the soft power of Chinese culture, and realize China's political propaganda.

The cultural "Going Out" Strategy includes elements such as the main body of the strategy, the target of the strategy's acceptance, and the goal of the strategy's realization. Based on the above elements, this paper argues that the cultural "Going Out" Strategy is the Chinese government's principle of respecting differences, voluntary equality, and safeguarding the fundamental interests of the people. The strategy aims at enhancing the cultural self-confidence of the Chinese people and safeguarding national cultural security. It fully mobilizes important forces such as government agencies and non-governmental organizations to show Chinese culture to the world in a planned manner in the fields of art and economy through cultural exchanges and cultural trade. In general, the cultural "Going Out" Strategy is an extension of the Chinese economy's "Going Out" Strategy and a comprehensive strategy to promote China's economic and cultural development. The "Going Out" Strategy of Chinese culture is that in globalization, the country combines cultural development strategies with economic and diplomatic strategy, coordinates various resources, makes overall coordination, and ensures that Chinese culture stands tall in the world.

Chapter 2.

Text Analysis of Wolf Warrior 2 in the Framework of Imperialism

2.1. Methodology

The first chapter introduces the Chinese cultural “Going Out” Strategy and the theoretical definition of imperialism and cultural imperialism. In addition, in order to further study whether Wolf Warrior 2 reflects imperialism, the first chapter redefines the political role of film as a commercial product, and then analyzes the commercialization process of the "Main Melody" film. Finally, the first chapter uses Ang Lee’s Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon as an example to analyze the combination of traditional Chinese elements and Hollywood technology in action movies.

The project used a case study and text analysis approach, focusing on Wolf Warrior 2, a Chinese commercial action film. I downloaded Wolf Warrior 2 from the Chinese movie website Xunlei Video, and I subsequently imported the movie into the movie editing software Premier to facilitate a frame-by-frame pull-down analysis of it and to facilitate my academic research on the film. First, I analyzed the main characters in this movie and listed the main characters of the movie in a table to examine the countries they represent and the symbols behind them. Second, in order to verify whether the movie Wolf Warrior 2 is applying the narrative strategy of Hollywood movies, I used the classic Hollywood narrative structure summarized by Hollywood screenwriters McKee and Snyder, i.e., the 15-point film narrative rhythm beat table, to examine the movie Wolf Warrior 2 and listed the narrative structure and main plot points of this movie.

Next, I sorted out the movie lines of Wolf Warrior 2, and used word cloud statistics software to count the word frequency in the lines, and got the most frequent words around the word "China". Last but not least, text analysis based on stylistic features shows that although perception itself is the basis of film research, film is a form of expression carefully designed by filmmakers to create a fictional world (Langkjaer, 2015). Therefore, it is necessary to recognize the creative representation of this fictional world in a more basic way than in the past. So, based on Langkjaer's research methods

on music and sound in movies, I further studied the accompaniment in *Wolf Warrior 2*. Langkjaer (2015) pointed out that text analysis in film music research can provide insights and interpretation frameworks that have not been fully resolved by experimental methods, and can be divided into vertical synchronous interaction and horizontal narrative implications.

2.2. Data

What has to be admitted is that the data has certain limitations. First of all, there are flaws in the study of movie lines. For the text study of *Wolf Warrior 2*, among the main characters of the movie, all the lines of the main characters are in Chinese, except for the lines of the antagonist Big Daddy, which are in English in the film. However, English subtitles were needed for the study period. Subtitle translation has limitations in time, space and text (Zhang, 2017 & Wang, 2017). The ideal translation is exactly the same in the content and form of the source and target languages, but due to differences in customs and cultures, it is difficult to reach a complete agreement between the two. Moreover, each language or nation has its own cultural style or characteristics, and it is unrealistic to realize the so-called absolute communication (Nida, 1970). The second is the flaws in the research form. The technical limitation of film is the root of film as art (Dai, 2007). Film image has two sides, it is both the advantages and disadvantages of film art. That is to say, the movie is limited by the picture frame, and cannot break through the form limitation in the text content display, and interact with the audience in real time. This leads to the inevitable personal subjectivity in research. Finally, the film's performance techniques are difficult to break through, and the plot and themes are also subject to time constraints. Although I use a combination of vision (text and film images) and auditory (music) in the research form, I must admit that there are too many forms of film art, and there are no clear boundaries and evaluation criteria. This is another limitation and challenge for the organization of my data.

Table 2.1 shows the main characters in *Wolf Warrior 2*. To further illustrate, first of all, I list the six main characters in the movie that promote the development of the plot: Leng Feng, Big Daddy, Rachel, Long Xiaoyun and Tutto. In the second column of the table, I listed the nationalities of these six movie characters in the film. Next, I listed the images represented by these six characters and their symbols in the movie. It can be seen that among the six characters, the Chinese soldier Leng Feng and Long Xiaoyun,

the American doctor Rachel and the African civilian boy Tutto are all positive, while the European Big Daddy is portrayed as the biggest villain, the mercenary leader who wants to use power and weapons to kill African leaders in order to gain absolute domination. It must be mentioned that although the African boy Tutto and Leng Feng's deceased fiancée Long Xiaoyun do not play many roles for the length of the film. In "Wolf Warrior 2", Leng Feng's girlfriend, Long Xiaoyun, is the captain of the special forces unit. Long Xiaoyun took the initiative to apply to Leng Feng for marriage before going to Africa for a mission, hoping they would get married when she returned from Africa. However, she was brutally killed by unknown forces while completing a military task in Africa. The criminal only left a silver patterned bullet at the crime scene. This bullet led to the story of Leng Feng's journey to Africa. African civilian boy Tutto is innocent and lively, and he admires Leng Feng so much that Leng Feng recognizes him as his godson. In the movie, Leng Feng's original intention to return to the battlefield was to rescue Tutto's biological mother. Therefore, Long Xiaoyun and Tutto are undeniably the central characters driving the plot in the beginning and end of the film, so they deserve to be listed in this table for detailed analysis.

Table 2.1. Main Characters of Wolf Warrior 2

Main Characters	Country / Continent Represented	Role	Role Types
Leng Feng	China	Veteran	Protagonist - Hero
Big Daddy	Europe	Mercenary Leader	Antagonist - Villain
Rachel	America	Doctor Going to Africa for Medical Assistance	Protagonist - Collaborator
Long Xiaoyun	China	Former Special Forces Captain	Protagonist - Hero
Tutto	Africa	Refugee	Civilian

Table 2.2 examines whether the narrative structure of Wolf Warrior 2 conforms to the classic Hollywood narrative system. As can be seen from the table, for this 117-minute movie (from the first frame at the beginning of the plot to the last frame at the end of the movie), it completely complies with the Hollywood 15-point metronome. Whether it is the cause, the passage, the turning point or the ending of the story, all strictly follow the accepted narrative logic of Hollywood. The most important thing is that through the main plot, it can be seen that the Chinese soldier Leng Feng in the movie is omnipotent. Leng Feng can achieve the so-called "maintenance of peace" with his own power, and

can even use glass to block bullets. This is completely a fantasy "Chinese hero", reflecting the individual heroism often filled with Hollywood action movies.

Table 2.2. The Main Plot of Wolf Warrior 2

Number	Plot Points	Compared to a 110-minute movie	Wolf Warrior 2 Plot Point 117-minute
1	Opening Image	1st minute	Pirates robbed fishing boats in the waters of Madagascar.
2	Theme Stated	5th minute	Leng Feng fought against the enemy with a gun and saved the crew.
3	Set-Up	1-10 minutes	In order to protect the family of his comrades-in-arms who died, Leng Feng kicked to death the rogue who demolished the houses of the people.
4	Catalyst	12th minute	Leng Feng was released from prison and went to Africa to track down the criminals who killed his fiancée Long Xiaoyun.
5	Debate	12-25 minutes	After witnessing the Red Scarf Army breaking into the urban area to kill African civilians, Leng Feng decided to fight against the Red Scarf to protect civilians.
6	Break into Two	25th minute	The Chinese army persuaded the Red Scarf to retreat and protected African civilians.
7	B-Story	30 minutes	The Chinese navy went to Africa to evacuate overseas Chinese, focusing on finding and rescuing Dr. Chen.
8	Fun & Games	30-55 minutes	Big Daddy looks for Dr. Chen.
9	Midpoint	55 minutes	Leng Feng chose to stay in Africa to help the Chinese army rescue Dr. Chen.
10	Bad Guy Close in	55-75 minutes	Big Daddy broke into a factory funded by China to shoot Leng Feng and killed innocent civilians.
11	All is Lost	75th minute	Leng Feng and Big Daddy fought desperately. His wound was infected with the Ramanra virus and his life was hard to save.
12	Dark Night of the Soul	75-85 minutes	Leng Feng was expelled from the factory due to illness and hid in a cave to receive treatment by American doctor Rachel.
13	Break into Three	85th minute	The United Nations sent a helicopter to the factory to rescue civilians, and Big Daddy attacked the helicopter.
14	Finale	85-110 minutes	Leng Feng returned to the Chinese factory to fight a decisive battle with Big Daddy.
15	Final Image	110th minute	Leng Feng won a thrilling victory and successfully led the civilians back home safely.

In addition to the plot of the movie, subtitles and lines also have a great influence in conveying information. For non-Chinese audiences in other countries, subtitles are the most direct and clearest information conveyed. These audiences can best understand the essence of the film story through the lines and subtitles. Especially for English-speaking Western audiences who do not have Chinese roots or lifestyles, the role of subtitles is even more important. In this sense, for research purposes, text analysis of English subtitles and lines in Wolf Warrior 2 can be a valuable tool.

Figure 2.1. Word Frequency Statistics

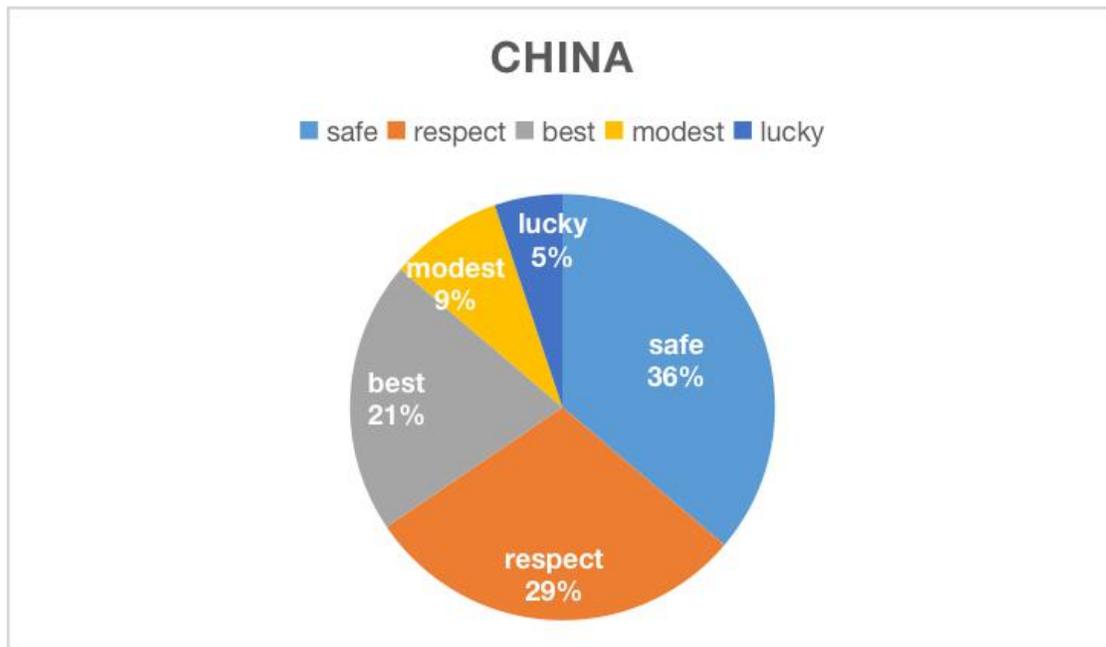


Figure 2.1 shows the word frequency statistics in the movie line text. For Wolf Warrior 2, the most frequent ranking is "China". Further testing around this term revealed that the five words safe, best, respect, modest, and lucky are the most frequently used words around "China" in the movie text. In descending order of frequency, the words safe, respect, best, modest and lucky were used. This confirms that when China is mentioned in Wolf Warrior 2, it is usually mentioned with positive words such as "safe", "best" and "modest". Most importantly, the two most frequent words are "safe" and "respect." This means that people can understand Leng Feng's behavior in the movie as China is "safe" and "respectful" for Africa. It must be mentioned that I performed manual screening when selecting vocabulary, because sometimes the most frequent word is the

name of the protagonist. But for this project, it is not a vocabulary that can effectively verify the hypothesis of China's "Going Out" Strategy, so it should be eliminated.

In *Wolf Warrior 2*, the connection between these words indicates that when the audience thinks about the film, they are likely to associate China with positive values and recognize China's role in stabilizing the world order. These texts are presented directly like visual images, and when the audience is watching the movie, they don't have enough time to think critically about these expressions. In addition, due to images and text form a complex synergy, they can affect a person's cognitive system, and thus strive to assist the audience to accept these concepts unconsciously and uncritically.

2.3. Findings

This analysis demonstrates the textual content of *Wolf Warrior 2* in terms of the film's characters, lines, story and revealed the possibility of mapping the imperialist power in the movie. Although for cinematic art it is essentially commercial, it cannot be fundamentally removed from politics. Specifically, film, as a vehicle of ideology, is the real material basis on which the "social unconscious" and the "political unconscious" are attached. Therefore, films are made in a certain historical context and inevitably carry the political ideology of a specific political party or class. However, the relationship between cinema and politics must be handled well, and must not be followed blindly.

It is undeniable that *Wolf Warrior 2* spread and penetrated the power of imperialism. The Chinese government clearly recognizes the political function of films, which is why the government maintains close ties with "Main Melody" films. To further illustrate, in *Wolf Warrior 2*, this close relationship between the film industry and politics further reflects the politicization of commercial films.

As the analysis shows, the Chinese commercial action film *Wolf Warrior 2* is deliberately imitating Hollywood blockbusters in terms of characterization and narrative structure. The cultural dilemmas presented in the film can only be solved by Leng Feng's heroic feat alone, which is a vain self-imagined outburst of national emotions. In the beginning, the hero Leng Feng was first discharged from the Chinese army as a "chivalrous man" for violating the ban on martial arts, and he gained the admiration of the lowest strata of society by kicking to death the villains who demolished houses. Later,

Leng Feng acts as a "supernumerary force" in Africa, using his so-called "sense of justice" to reunite with the attributes of the state. This narrative content both obscures the two sides of state behavior and links this "supernumerary pacifism" with state attributes, giving a "personal pacifist meaning" to what is still essentially a transgression of state power.

To sum up, the reflection on the influence of ideology on the "quality of artistic creation" is more important than the objective artistic standard itself. In the case of *Wolf Warrior 2*, the application of ideology in the film is even more worthy of consideration. In other words, ideology is used here as a creative tool like the plot and pictures. For this creative tool, it is an objective element of the appeal of the film. From a micro level, the film creators "politically unconsciously" used artistic forms to export a kind of "populism and extreme personal heroism covered by pacifism." Why was this ideology born in today's context? What does it reflect in essence? In order to better understand what led to such a result, it is most important to study why *Wolf Warrior 2* reflects the imperialist power from the cultural, political and economic perspectives.

Chapter 3.

Realistic Reasons for the Unpopularity of Wolf Warrior 2 in Foreign Countries

3.1. Introduction

From the above analysis, it can be seen that the movie Wolf Warrior 2 mirrors some of the imperialist forces. Here, it is necessary to mention the Wolf Warrior 2 film series. From the above analysis, it can be seen that the movie Wolf Warrior 2 mirrors some of the imperialist forces, both in terms of narrative structure and story content. Here, we have to mention the Wolf Warrior series of movies. From the perspective of the film's narrative, the biggest villains of the two Wolf Warrior series are a nearly transparent ethnic group that has neither a clear political stand nor national interests (Wu, 2019). The biggest villain in Wolf Warrior 1 is a drug lord of a multinational group, while Big Daddy, the biggest villain in Wolf Warrior 2, is a Western mercenary who overrides the law and order and tramples on the right of human existence. When these enemies who cannot see their true identities fight against Leng Feng, it is more like a common battle between police and gangsters. Wu Jing, the director and starring actor of the Wolf Warrior series, puts a kind of national sentiment in a storyline, thereby concealing the fact that the police and robbers are opposed in the film. The drug lords in Wolf Warrior 1 stole Chinese genes to develop biological weapons. Wolf Warrior 2 set up a storyline for Leng Feng to execute and protect his compatriots. It is not difficult to see that the director's handling in Wolf Warrior 2 is obviously more "skillful" and concealed.

In addition, the film's handling of whether the Chinese government has a legitimate reason for using violence overseas has also expanded the nationalist boundary that Wolf Warrior 2 strives to present to a certain extent. Even this way of handling essentially solves the story logic of why the former exceptional soldier Leng Feng fought alone. However, this approach also truly reproduces an extremely embarrassing reality and logic problem, that is, in the film, because the captain insists on the political position of the Chinese army not being able to recruit soldiers without the permission of the United Nations, he has to be a person who has his skills but has been

removed from the military. The special forces Leng Feng went to complete the arduous task of rescuing the people.

This can be further explained by another film clip. In the film, the Chinese Navy's ocean-going fleet allowed the launch of long-range missiles until the helpless Leng Feng used his mobile phone to broadcast live broadcasts of the overseas Chinese and African people being attacked. Just before the launch of this long-range missile, the captain received a key call from his superiors. At this time, the captain began to roar and ordered "fire", but he did not explain the content of the call. The content of the message is unknown, but it is clear that the fire at this time is also a latecomer. The film also hints that whether it is evacuation of overseas Chinese or UN peacekeeping operations, they have always advocated non-force behavior, or that force can be used passively under the coordination of the United Nations. However, behind all these actions are at the expense of the interests of the Chinese compatriots and the loss of the country's overseas property. Just like the line in the film "Decades of commercial operations are ruined." The film's too weak storyline makes this Chinese-style development dilemma obvious.

When *Wolf Warrior 1* was first released, some scholars clearly pointed out that this kind of nationalism in the film was actually a self-imaginative "circus-style patriotism" of director Wu Jing. There are also scholars who believe that *Wolf Warrior 2* regards patriotism as a flamboyant performance, only resorting to sensationalism to maintain the enthusiasm of the audience. And such narrative content and methods are bound to push the so-called "patriotism" to an irrational and extreme path. However, what needs to be clarified is the social factors behind this phenomenon. In other words, there are opinions that both the narrative structure and story content of *Wolf Warrior 2* mirror some of the imperialist forces, and the essence of this result is due to the political, economic and cultural factors contained in Chinese society. It also makes the images of *Wolf Warrior 2* show an imitation of American cultural imperialism.

3.2. Political Reasons

In fact, the main body of the story told by the film has a realistic prototype, that is, the 2015 evacuation operation in Yemen. On March 26, 2015, the international coalition forces launched an air strike against the Houthis in Yemen, causing the local situation to

suddenly become tense. In order to protect the lives and property of Chinese citizens, the Chinese government ordered the Chinese navy, which is performing a mission in the Gulf of Aden, to immediately go to Yemen to perform the evacuation mission. Due to the rapidly changing situation and the chaos in Yemen, the entire evacuation had to be done by the Chinese Navy alone. In the end, China evacuated 613 of its own citizens in four batches and also assisted 279 foreign nationals from 15 countries to evacuate safely.

Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC (2012), under the theme of peace and development of the times, the CPC has clearly put forward the exchange concept of "peace, development, cooperation, and win-win". In recent years, with the improvement of Chinese film creation ability, the promotion of cultural "Going Out" Strategy and the need for further economic development, Chinese film creators have begun to go abroad for shooting. In this way, the space of the movie is enriched, and the visual imagination of the audience is satisfied as much as possible. But what exactly should this so-called "visual belief" be? When showing Leng Feng's life in Africa, the film added a plot of the African boy Totto and Leng Feng's enthusiastic interaction, and also showed the friendly relationship between Leng Feng and local residents. This is an audiovisual picture that has never been seen in the African video world dominated by Hollywood. In fact, this kind of geographical depiction demonstrates the creator's intention to break through Hollywood's African narrative.

However, the subsequent dramatic changes in the plot of the movie seem to have brought the audience into a "more familiar" movie world. The peace and calm where Leng Feng was located was quickly broken. The ravages of the Ramanla virus in this African country led to the outbreak of civil war. At the same time, the Red Scarf Army massacred the people in order to seize power. The government was weak, and the Prime Minister was shot and killed by the rebels. Children infected with the Ramanra virus are kept in cages. The hungry people in the slums are looting food and so on. These images also miss the essence of a vivid interpretation of China-Africa cooperation. In recent years, China has often been accused of "neo-colonialism" by the international media when it comes to African issues. In the face of questions about the handling of African issues in *Wolf Warrior 2*, director Wu Jing responded as follows :

With the rise of China and the Belt and Road Initiative, our prowess is establishing. Given the fact that we have been pressed for so many years, we are in

need of an outlet, in need of a stronger country to protect our hard-earnings, and thus in need of a national hero, an iconic figure. Every audience has the patriotic spark in his heart, and has been looking forward to someone to ignite it. I simply threw in a small fire into it. What really burned up was the patriotic feeling of all Chinese people. We should thank this timing. Only a strong country can protect us, so to be truly patriotic is to love yourself, and to love yourself is to be more patriotic (Chinese Film Market, 2018).

However, is this "patriotism" truly patriotic? In fact, from the filming in Africa to the release of the film, the filmmakers continued to promote the terrible and arduous propaganda of filming in Africa. The high box office results of *Wolf Warrior 2* also fulfilled the producer's expectations. However, this story of saving Africa only sets the background in Africa, and hype this new thing to the Chinese film industry, but completely ignores the deformed power generated by this narrative. Moreover, the so-called "Africa" in the film seems to be placed anywhere. The opening subtitles of the film vaguely show places such as the "Madagascar waters of the Indian Ocean", but no specific country is indicated. First of all, the film creators are to avoid the inconvenience of shooting most of the scenes in China, and also strive to avoid involving specific state-to-state relations and triggering sensitive topics.

Looking back to history, during the colonial period, Westerners controlled film activities in Africa, and most of the production and dissemination of films was to promote and beautify colonialism. As Armes (2006) said, the film's arrival in Africa was born with colonialism, and its main role is to provide cultural and ideological legitimacy for political rule and economic exploitation. Since the African National Liberation Movement in the 1960s, Hollywood movies have been criticized by African people as a form of image colonization. It is a new colonial style after the European and American empires ended the previous political colonization, that is, using cultural hegemony to continuously shape and exaggerate the negative problems of Africa, and then strengthen the rescue of Hollywood heroes. The logic behind this narrative is to strengthen Africa's need for the "help" of imperialism. The "positive" effect it brings is to write about the legitimacy of the ideology of Europe and the United States in Africa's past and present, while the negative effect is to give the world audience the impression that Africa is backward, bloody, violent and terrifying. Chinese audiences immersed in Hollywood blockbusters are no exception. Therefore, people talk about Rwanda as a massacre, and talk about Somalia as pirates (Zhang, 2017 & Chen, 2018). In the new situation of Sino-African cooperation,

Wolf Warrior 2's portrayal of Africa repeats Hollywood's old routine more than ten years ago, even though Wolf Warrior 2 tries to break the Hollywood-style narrative intent. In the end, the film images clearly demonstrate a sense of superiority over China's assistance to Africa as a major power. It must be said that this is an obvious mistake and regret.

3.3. Economic Reasons

After the end of the Cold War, the Western world achieved unprecedented expansion of the global market by virtue of its global hegemony. While achieving unprecedented prosperity, it also planted disasters. The predicament that has prevailed in the Western world since the international financial crisis of 2008 is also the inevitable result driven by the logic of capital (Huang, Wang & Qian, 2020, p. 52). This Western model is facing the most serious and comprehensive challenge since World War II. Furthermore, the economic dilemma makes the Western model have to balance open and contractive economic policies. The political dilemma makes the Western model have to balance elite politics and populism. The social dilemma makes the Western model have to balance between liberalism and conservatism. The ideological dilemma makes the Western model have to balance morality and interests (Wu, 2019 & Wu, 2017). In modern times, financial capital not only serves the economy, but also controls politics, culture and ecology. It not only dominates society and nature, but also dominates people and capital. It not only dominates a specific country, but also erodes the entire world (Huang, 2020). At this stage of development, using, controlling and surpassing financial capital to improve one's voice and achieve a higher degree of liberation and freedom has become an important goal in China's development process.

According to the statistics, the number of Chinese films filmed on location overseas has been increasing year by year. In 2014, for example, 12 of the 32 Chinese commercial films that were successful at the box office were filmed abroad (Zhang, 2017 & Chen, 2017). On the one hand, the film has a role in promoting the development of foreign tourism, which makes the tourism departments of some countries welcome film shooting and even provide a lot of convenience to recruit crews. On the other hand, after the United States, France, Japan, Thailand, Singapore and other countries have successively obtained considerable economic benefits, the audience began to

experience a certain degree of aesthetic fatigue. As a result, Chinese filmmakers began to focus on Africa, and *Wolf Warrior 2* is a typical one.

Marxism believes that politics is the concentrated expression of economy. The economic foundation determines the superstructure. The superstructure reacts to the economic foundation. The superstructure sometimes plays a decisive role in the economic foundation. The political superstructure plays a leading role in the superstructure (Huang , 2020). Therefore, politics and economy are like a balance beam, and should not and cannot be thoroughly discussed separately. In other words, if the driving force of soft power is purely political, the conflicting nature of commercial and political interests complicates this pursuit and makes it more difficult to achieve. However, if it is believed that economic strength determines political strength, then China's film industry has a mediocre performance internationally and should not conceal its process of global capital expansion through financial activities (Zhang, 2016). From this perspective, Chinese films represented by *Wolf Warrior 2* have made progress towards the "dominant vision" of "power control" under the current "global capitalist order".

In the report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, it was clearly pointed out that "China's economy has already moved from a stage of rapid growth to a stage of high-quality growth." Judging from the current state of China's economic development, it has gradually begun to shift from the pursuit of speed to the pursuit of quality (Zhang, 2020). As the world's second largest economy, this change in development goals has brought more challenges to China's economic development. Due to the influence of many factors, China has suffered many obstacles in this development process. Although China's economy has developed rapidly in recent years and has become the world's second largest economy, the international discourse power is still controlled by Western countries, presenting a situation of "strong west and weak east" (Ye, 2021). Western public opinion has a confrontational "dual opposition" interpretation of China (Su, 2019). In February 2021, a report issued by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs showed that most Americans described China as a world power, posing a "serious threat" to the development of the United States. 88% of Republican leaders and 64% of the Republican public believed that the United States should work hard to restrict China's strength growth (Divisions on US-China Policy: Opinion Leaders and the Public). The "Global Survey Report on China's National Image 2019" also shows that the scores

of developed countries on China's overall image have dropped from 5.6 points in 2016 - 2017 to 5.4 points in 2018 and 5.3 points in 2019. Under this Western hegemonic discourse and public opinion structure, China is eager and has to find a new way to spread Chinese voice and increase China's affinity. Therefore, the westernization trend of Chinese films is not caused by actively catering to Western culture, but by the unequal international communication order and commercial system.

3.4. Cultural Conflicts

Globalization has made cultural exchanges between countries closer and more frequent. In the unequal world communication system, films from China, Thailand, Brazil, India and other countries have begun to flow to Western countries, but these are from developing countries. The cultural products exported into the Western capitalist market bear the stigma of Western values. China has gradually participated in cultural trade with an active attitude. However, in the international film market dominated by Western business rules, unequal trade status has forced my country's film companies to produce many films with Western cultural features. This not only fails to achieve a true cultural "Going Out" of equality, but also seriously hinders the healthy development of the global film industry.

As Schiller (1969) argues, an international trade system dominated by Western commercial rules would condition the profitability of film products to force countries in a weak position in international trade, including China, to accept the principle. When it comes to product management issues, even "arrogant" film culture producers will eventually become "rational" businessmen (Zhu, 2019). In order to maximize profits, the Western film model with a higher market share has become the first choice of filmmakers. The operation of this commercialization model makes the westernization of Chinese films particularly obvious in both the capital market and the product market.

On the one hand, the universalism, individualism, conservatism and crisis consciousness, etc. conveyed in Hollywood blockbusters are hidden behind the textual structure of the films (Zhu, 2019 & Su, 2016). On the other hand, through successful commercialization, Hollywood films seem to have become a kind of cinematic religion. The Hollywood narrative model then becomes an international standard (Zhu, 2019). As mentioned earlier, in a market dominated by the rules of Western economic theory,

Chinese films are forced to apply the Hollywood film model, which is more mature in terms of commercial operations, in order to open up the market quickly. Even if the locality of the film content hopes to ensure that the film is not politically oriented to the West, the change in film expression makes the film unconsciously convey the Western cultural values hidden in the structure.

Some scholars believe that the use of Hollywood narrative mode to elaborate Chinese stories is a manifestation of cultural exchange between China and the West, and is a useful attempt and innovation for Chinese films to step into the international arena. They believe that whether Chinese cinema is westernized or not should depend on whether it abandons its own culture to spread or attach to Western values. However, in my opinion, this view ignores the background of unequal trade rules in today's world to a certain extent. In addition, the facts of Western values conveyed through the structure of the movie also make the aforementioned viewpoints unjustified. More importantly, the innovation of film text mode is not a simple splicing of the text structure of Chinese and Western films, but a new content and expression of film text based on the absorption of the advantages of Western films. Therefore, the use of Hollywood narrative mode like *Wolf Warrior 2* is still a manifestation of cultural imperialism.

Commercialization can penetrate any barriers constructed by political and cultural differences, so the business rules established by the United States can become the dominant principle of cultural globalization (Schiller, 1976). The essence of cultural globalization is to serve the logic of capital. As a result, consumerist culture prevails around the world, destroying the economic foundation and cultural traditions of various nations, and leading to cultural standardization and cultural economic integration (Jameson, 1986 & Zhang, 2015). Although China does not seek self-identification by moving closer to the West in terms of political and cultural ideology, the fact that it is in a passive position in cultural trade due to insufficient economic strength cannot be denied. Therefore, it can be said that the adoption of the Western model in Chinese films was caused by being forced by Western-dominated business rules. With the intensification of cultural industrialization and commercialization, under the influence of the market, business rules are bound to have an impact on the text and structure of movies (Zhu, 2015). This is embodied in the film's narrative mode, language expression, and visual presentation. This westernized form of expression will unconsciously convey Western cultural values. Combining Schiller's point of view, the westernization trend of

Chinese film is developed in the globalized unequal international relations, under the compulsion of the commercial rules of developed countries, and film producers in pursuit of profit maximization. In such a social context, Chinese films continue to use the textual structure and expression of Western films, but it also promotes the penetration and dissemination of Western imperialist cultural values through films.

"De-Americanization" and "re-Chineseization" have been the prior goals of China to enhance its cultural industry (Zhang, 2016). As Wang (2009) states, "China should rediscover the true Eastern values to harmonize the world." However, what are the true oriental values and how should they harmonize the world? At least, we cannot imagine such a realization in terms of cultural commodities branded with imperialist power like *Wolf Warrior 2*. However, as mentioned earlier, if we consider only national power, China's cultural industry development is not yet as prominent as its economic performance on the global stage. In fact, its soft power is usually exaggerated in Western discourse (Zhang, 2016). Moreover, when recalling Shiller's original definition of cultural imperialism as the "domination" and "subordination" of social structures and values, we cannot say that cultural imperialism has disappeared when looking at China as a competitor of the United States in the global cultural industry. The truth is that this so-called "reverse imperialism" may not come until the day when the class struggle disappears and the world becomes a union (Zhang, 2016, p. 26).

Chapter 4.

Conclusion

This project studies whether *Wolf Warrior 2*, a Chinese commercial blockbuster, reflects the power of imperialism. I explored the reasons for this phenomenon from three dimensions: political reasons, economic reasons, and cultural contradictions. As I analyzed, *Wolf Warrior 2* is a Chinese military action "Main Melody" movie. The film eventually pushed the industry indicators of Chinese cinema to new heights with an outstanding Chinese gross of 5.681 billion RMB. However, it must be noted that the success of *Wolf Warrior 2* at the Chinese box office does not conceal the fact that Western cultural values are conveyed through the film. This has led to a complete lack of purity in the film expression of the Chinese government's essentially "Going Out" Strategy and national ideology. Back to the movie itself, although the content of the movie originated from real events in China. However, the use of Chinese elements is not the key to promoting the development of the film's plot, and even the film director does not deny this blunt use. As an expression of film language, the plot directly affects the artistic effect that the film wants to convey. *Wolf Warrior 2* uses Hollywood's narrative model to promote the development of the plot, which makes the Chinese cultural value that the film originally hoped to convey is embarrassingly wrapped in the Western film language expression model. In the end, the purity of expression is reduced.

Specifically, *Wolf Warrior 2* was supposed to tell the Chinese story and evoke the patriotic spirit of the Chinese people by eulogizing the Chinese army for protecting the Chinese and saving the African people, and also to make its voice heard in the context of Western cultural hegemony. Unfortunately, this expression coincides with the universalist values of Hollywood movies that create the image of national saviors through violence. The only difference is that the central location of this narrative becomes China in *Wolf Warrior 2*. First, the story of Leng Feng rescuing civilians is the same in nature as the narrative of Captain America and other superheroes defeating the bad guys and maintaining peace in the world as messengers of justice. In the final episode of *Wolf Warrior 2*, Leng Feng raises the Chinese flag, which brings this "Chinese" universalism to its peak. Secondly, the setting that Leng Feng can save the refugees alone is contrary to the traditional Chinese norm of promoting collectivism. Thus, the

cultural aggressiveness of the apolitical cultural values hidden behind the narrative model of Western cinema becomes apparent. In this way, it is not too much to attribute Wolf Warrior 2 to the category of mapping the power of imperialism. In this awkward textual "grafting", it is easy to understand the unpopularity of Wolf Warrior 2 in foreign audiences.

It is undeniable that there are still certain limitations in my project research. Since there is no theoretical framework that fully fits the study, I have adopted the research results of many Chinese and Western scholars in the construction of the imperialist framework for Wolf Warrior 2, trying to fit the actual situation in China. But it is inevitable that there are omissions in the richness of the theory. However, it is inevitable that there are omissions in theoretical richness. As I said, the cultural values conveyed by the use of the narrative structure and characterization of Hollywood blockbusters in Wolf Warrior 2 are the "fruits" of Western culture. The expression of this western language also makes the prototype of Chinese traditional culture mutate in the movie. This makes Chinese culture face the danger of being dissolved and assimilated. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to this phenomenon.

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